

## Message Text

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12  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSC-01

/060 W

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P R 131530Z JAN 76  
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0972  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
USMISSION NATO BURSELS

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E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: PGOV,PINT,NO  
SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE NORDLI NAMES NEW NORWEGIAN  
GOVERNMENT

REFS: OSLO 0070, 75 OSLO 5520, 75 OSLO 4159

SUMMARY: NORWAY'S PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE ODVAR  
NORDLI ANNOUNCED HIS CABINET JAN 12. IT WILL RETAIN  
A MAJORITY OF THE MINISTERS WHICH MAKE UP THE PRESENT  
BRATTELI LABOR GOVERNMENT, AND WILL ADD SEVEN NEW  
MEMBERS. FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND AND FINANCE  
MINISTER KLEPPE WILL CONTINUE ON IN THE NORDLI GOV-  
ERNMENT, WHILE DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL WILL BE  
REPLACED BY OSLO LABOR PARTY LEADER ROLF HANSEN.  
THE GOVERNMENT IS EXPECTED TO TAKE OVER LATER THIS  
WEEK. WHILE LOCATED PERHAPS SOMEWHAT MORE IN THE  
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MIDDLE OF THE LABOR PARTY POLITICAL SPECTRUM, THE NEW

CABINET IS EXPECTED TO FOLLOW THE ESSENTIAL LINES  
OF THE PREDECESSOR BRATTELI GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY

1. IN WHAT IS LIKELY TO BE ONE OF THE LOWEST-KEY OF  
GOVERNMENT CHANGES, LABOR PARTY PRIME  
MINISTER DESIGNATE ODVAR NORDLI ANNOUNCED HIS NEW  
GOVERNMENT AT AN EVENING PRESS CONFERENCE ON JAN 12  
IN OSLO. NORDLI'S LIST RETAINED NINE MINISTERS OF THE  
PREDECESSOR BRATTELI GOVERNMENT, GIVING TWO OF THEM  
DIFFERENT PORTFOLIOS, AND INCLUDED SEVEN NEW MEMBERS.  
THE LIST CONTAINED NO SENSATIONAL CHANGES, BUT THERE  
WERE SOME UNEXPECTED NEW FACES. THE NEW GOVERNMENT  
WILL TAKE OFFICE LATE THIS WEEK. NORDLI AND PRIME  
MINISTER BRATTELI WILL MEET JAN 13 TO DISCUSS THE  
SPECIFIC TIMING.

2. THE NEW MINISTERS INCLUDE NORDLI HIMSELF, CHAIRMAN  
OF THE OSLO LABOR PARTY ROLF HANSEN, 55, AS DEFENSE  
MINISTER, STORINGSMAN RAGNAR CHRISTIANSEN, 53,  
COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER, BUDGET DIRECTOR HALLVARD  
BAKKE, 32, COMMERCE MINISTER, DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL  
OFFICER OSKAR OKSNES, 54, AGRICULTURE MINISTER,  
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND AUTHOR KJOLV EGELAND, 57, CHURCH  
AND EDUCATION MINISTER, AND LABOR PARTY CENTRAL  
COMMITTEE MEMBER RUTH RYSTE, 43, SOCIAL AFFAIRS MINISTER.  
BIOS FOLLOW BY SEPTEL.

3. FROM THE BRATTELI CABINET NORDLI RETAINED FOREIGN  
MINISTER KNUT FRYDENLUND, FINANCE MINISTER PER KLEPPE,  
LAW OF SEA AND FISHERIES LIMITS MINISTER JENS EVENSEN,  
JUSTICE MINISTER INGER LOUISE VALLE, FISHERIES MINISTER  
EIVIND BOLLE, MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS MINISTER LEIF AUNE  
AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND.

4. TWO MEMBERS OF THE PREVIOUS CABINET WERE ASSIGNED  
NEW PORTFOLIOS. FORMER CHURCH AND EDUCATION MINISTER  
BJARTMAR GJERDE WAS NAMED MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND  
FORMER COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER ANNEMARIE LORENTZEN  
WILL BE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION.

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5. NORDLI ANNOUNCED HIS CABINET AFTER HIS PROPOSALS  
HAD BEEN APPROVED BY THE LABOR PARTY'S CENTRAL  
AND NATIONAL COMMITTEES AND ITS STORTING GROUP. HE  
DROVE TO THE PALACE TO INFORM THE KING OF HIS DECISION  
JUST BEFORE THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

6. AT THE CONFERENCE NORDLI WAS ACCOMPANIED BY

LABOR PARTY LEADERS, INCLUDING PARTY CHAIRMAN STEEN, WHO GAINED HIS POST AS A RESULT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE COMPROMISE AGREEMENT OF LAST SEPTEMBER. THAT AGREEMENT BROKE THE USUAL PATTERN OF COMBINING PARTY CHAIRMAN AND PRIME MINISTER POSTS IN ONE PERSON AND AWARDED THE CHAIRMANSHIP TO STEEN,WHO DREW SUPPORT FROM THE LEFT OF THE PARTY, AND NAMED CENTERIST NORDLI AS PRIME MINISTER WHEN BRATTELI STEPPED DOWN. STEEN REFERRED TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION AGREEMENT DURING THE CONFERENCE AND THE TWO LEADERS INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOGETHER.

7. NORDLI'S CABINET CONTAINED MORE CHANGES THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED. IN PART THIS PROBABLY DEMONSTRATES NORDLI'S DESIRE TO PUT HIS OWN STAMP ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT SO AS TO IDENTIFY IS FROM THE BRATTELI LABOR GOVERNMENT AND IN PART REFLECTS THE NEED TO RETAIN CERTAIN BASIC GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION. THE CABINET WILL HAVE FOUR WOMEN, ONE MORE THAN THE BRATTELI GOVERNMENT. THE MAJOR CHANGE FROM THE FOREIGN POLICY STANDPOINT WAS REPLACEMENT OF DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL BY ROLF HANSEN. FOSTER-VOLL WAS RUMORED AS A POSSIBLE CHANGE ALLEGEDLY BECAUSE OF SOME UNHAPPINESS OVER THE WAY HE HANDLED THE ISSUE OF POLITICS IN THE ARMED FORCES. HANSEN HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE WITH THIS ISSUE AS HE HAS SERVED LONG AS OMBUDSMAN FOR THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. WHILE HE HAS LIMITED EXPERIENCE OTHERWISE IN SECURITY MATTERS, HE IS REGARDED AS A STRONG INDIVIDUAL,GOOD ORGANIZER, AND AN ADVOCATE OF A STRONG DEFENSE AND NATO COOPERATION. THE NOMINATION OF BAKKE AS COMMERCE MINISTER WAS PERHAPS THE OUT-STANDING SURPRISE. AT 32, HE WILL BE NOT ONLY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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YOUNGEST MINISTER,BUT ALSO ONE WHO IS KNOWN IN THE PAST AT LEAST AS AN OPPONENT OF NORWEGIAN MEMBERSHIP IN EEC. CHAIRMAN OF ONE OF LABOR'S WEST COAST PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, HE IS CONSIDERED TO BE BRILLIANT, DYNAMIC AND A BOW TO THE PARTY YOUTH.

8. IN INTRODUCING HIS CABINET CHOICE,NORDLI SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE THE POLICIES OF ITS PREDECESSOR LABOR GOVERNMENT. HE SAID HIS MAJOR TASKS WOULD BE TO STRENGTHEN WORKING CAPACITY IN TWO MAJOR AREAS: INDUSTRY, OIL EUD ENERGY POLICIES 'A TASK FOR WITH THE HARD WORKING AND CAPABLE GJERDE IS WELL PLACED) AND IN FAMILY,CONSUMER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY MATTERS. EARLIER IIN THE WEEK HE SAID HE SAW NO REASON TO EXPECT A CHANGE IN DEFENSE

OR SECURITY AFFAIRS IN HIS GOVERNMENT.

9. HAVING RESOLVED THE GOVERNMENT QUESTION THE LABOR PARTY IS NOW BUSY SEEKING TO RESOLVE OTHER IMPORTANT PERSONNEL DECISIONS. A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF SIX HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON LABOR PARTY LEADERSHIP IN THE STORTING AND ITS COMMITTEES, AND TO SUGGEST A STORTING POSITION FOR MR. BRATTELI. ALSO DECISIONS MUST BE MADE SOON ON THE KEY POSTS OF MINISTERIAL UNDERSECRETARIES AND POLITICAL AND PERSONAL SECRETARIES.

10. MOST OBSERVERS NOW VIEW THE NORDLI GOVERNMENT AS BESED IN THE CENTER OF THE PARTY. WHILE CHAIRMAN STEEN NODDED SUPPORT TO THE INCOMING PRIME MINISTER IT STILL REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE LEFT WING OF THE LABOR PARTY WILL BE SATISFIED WITH A CENTRIST GOVERNMENT. EMBASSY WILL SEND ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF CABINET CHANGE SOON BY SEPTTEL.

11. AS MINORITY GOVERNMENT ONE OF ITS MAIN LEGISLATIVE TASKS WILL BE TO CONTINUE TO DRAW SUPPORT FROM THE OPPOSITION PARTIES. THEY INITIALLY GREETED NORDLI'S CABINET WITH MODERATION. THEIR LEADERS AGREED GENERALLY THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY CONTINUE ALONG LINES SET BY THE BRATTELI GOVERNMENT AND NOT SET ANY MAJOR NEW COURSES.  
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12. AS LABOR'S GOVERNMENT LEADER NORDLI HAS LESS THAN TWO YEARS BEFORE THE 1977 ELECTIONS. IF CURRENT VOTING AND POLL TRENDS AND GROWING LIKELIHOOD OF NON-SOCIALIST COOPERATION ARE RELIABLE INDICATORS HE HAS AN UPHILL TASK BEFORE HIM. IN THE TIME AHEAD HE WILL HAVE TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF AND HIS GOVERNMENT AT THE SAME TIME AND WILL HAVE TO REGAIN LABOR'S FALTERING ELECTORAL SUPPORT.  
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